GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:84
ANSWERED ON:14.07.2014
TELECOM SERVICES IN NORTH EAST HILLY STATES
Kashyap Shri Virender

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken note of deficient mobile services viz. connectivity problems, dropping calls, weak signals etc. provided by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited in the North East and other hilly States/Areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there are reports that a number of towers in Himachal Pradesh and other hilly States have been installed but not yet activated, and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard including augmenting telecom infrastructure in North East/Hilly States/Areas, so as to ensure seamless service to the customers in these States/ Areas?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS

(a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 84 FOR 14TH JULY, 2014 REGARDING "TELECOM SERVICES IN NORTH EAST/HILLY STATES"

(a) & (b) Yes, Madam, Government is conscious of the deficient services including poor connectivity of the mobile network of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in the North East and other Hilly States. Government is committed to improve the Quality of Service (QoS) of mobile services of BSNL by addressing problems in connectivity and service delivery.
Quality of Service (QoS) parameters are prescribed by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). While BSNL meets the benchmark parameters in general, the services of BSNL are below the benchmark levels for certain parameters in certain areas. The deficiencies in QoS parameters are on account of network performance, customer service delivery, congestion, inadequate network coverage etc. Call drop rates in the North-East Region are higher as there are coverage problems in some areas. Details for QoS assessed on network parameters for the quarter ending March, 2014 as provided by TRAI are at Annexure-I.

(c) BSNL has reported that in State of Himachal Pradesh, 54 Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) tower are installed but not activated due to delay in electric connections by Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board (HPSEB). BSNL has informed that there is no tower installed but not activated in other hilly states.

(d) BSNL is expanding its network across the country including Himachal Pradesh and hilly states through installation of 15 Million lines at a cost of Rs.4804 crores under Phase-VII plan. Details of Phase-VII expansion plan of BSNL in hilly states are at Annexure-II.

New BTSs are planned to improve signal quality and regular RF optimization is being done. Under Phase-VII expansion plan total 2202 BTS (2G) and Node-B (3G) have been planned for hilly states, out of which 984 have been commissioned.

Telecom Commission has in its meeting on 13-06-2014 approved a comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for North-Eastern Region (NER)at an estimated cost of Rs. 5336.18 crores as per the recommendations of TRAI. Main thrust areas identified for improvement and augmentation of telecom services in NER are as below:

i. to provide 2G mobile coverage to all identified uncovered Villages.

ii. to provide seamless 2G mobile coverage along the National Highways in NER.

iii. to ensure reliability of and redundancy in the transmission network at State capitals and district headquarters in NER.

Uncovered villages without mobile connectivity in the country will be covered in a phased manner, with villages in hilly states other than

those in North Eastern Region (NER) proposed to be taken up in the first phase with funding support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).